

1. *Mr. Canales misrepresents himself to the public stating that he has extensive conversations with his constituents about projects when he does not.*

I have had eight community meetings since HOME submitted their rezoning request in April. We have discussed the project at most of those meetings. Ms. Peacock and Mr. Nuñez attended one of those meetings, and we discussed the issue for around 45 minutes.

I also attended the HOME Board of Commissioners meeting held at the nearby Polly Harris Senior Center and listened to HOME's presentation as well as the extensive public comment about this topic. I stayed in the lobby for about 45 minutes after the meeting to speak with all the constituents who wanted to talk to me.

2. *Mr. Canales does not inform the residents about projects in their district.*

I hold community meetings at least every two weeks at which I present extensive updates, including about projects in the district. Those meetings are publicized via my email newsletter and social media. I also publish a 'Biweekly Review' online with detailed updates about City Council decisions, City issues, community events, etc.

3. *Mr. Canales lied about not knowing about a project until April of 2024, when he touted the project to the City Council in January of 2024.*

I have said that I did not learn about HOME's rezoning application until the sign went up on the property in April. That is 100% true. In [this letter](#) that I shared with my neighborhood on April 14, I think I make very clear what the sequence of events was:

"While I didn't know about HOME's current request to rezone the property until the sign went up last week (I learned about it at the same time as almost everyone else in the neighborhood), I have had an idea that the Housing Authority was likely going to look to build there since **they purchased the property from El Paso Water's inventory back in 2019 (four years before I took office)**. HOME applied for a federally funded [9% Low Income Housing Tax Credit](#) award for this property last year, and the City Council was presented that project along with others from both HOME and private developers in January 2024, though HOME may not ultimately be successful in that application with the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs in the most recent round of funding."

4. *When we asked Mr. Canales for information concerning certain projects, he did not give us the information we requested.*

This is very nonspecific, but if it is related to HOME's proposal, I shared a very detailed explanation of around 3000 words with all of the information I knew about the project on April 14, a couple of days after the rezoning notice sign went up on the property:

<https://cityrepchriscanales.com/home-south-mesa-hills>

I have since been responsive to requests for additional information about the rezoning request. I don't have every piece of information about the proposed development itself since that is being done by HOME, an entity separate from the City government, but I have shared all that I know and directed people to the appropriate contacts to answer their other questions.

5. *Mr. Canales seems to ignore the vast majority of residents in certain areas to push his own agenda.*

I very regularly engage with the neighborhoods in my district and attend nearly every neighborhood association meeting I am invited to attend, most of them on a regular monthly basis. These include but are not limited to the Rio Grande NA, Sunset Heights Neighborhood Improvement Association, South Side NA/Conscious Barrio, Kern Place Association, Five Points NA, Familias Unidas del Chamizal, Rim Area NA, Chihuahueta NA, Texas & Myrtle Business District Association, and Sunrise Civic Group. At my community meeting last week, I spent about two hours explaining the City's proposed budget in great detail and soliciting feedback from those who attended.

6. *Mr. Canales returned neither calls nor emails.*

I will follow up with my email thread with the petitioners going back several months. As you can see, I have promptly answered their messages, provided requested information, and connected them with those who can answer their more specific questions.

7. *Mr. Canales lacks vision for quality-of-life projects in his district.*

This concern is non-specific, but during my 19 months in office we have completed resurfacing of every sports court in District 8 (excepting Madeline Park, which is still in progress), refreshed benches and picnic tables in City parks, completed a major improvement project at Cleveland Square Park, have completed and will shortly open signature projects at La Nube Children's Museum and Science Center and the Mexican American Cultural Center, and completed renovations of libraries including the Westside Branch and Doris Van Doren Branch Libraries (as well as the soon to reopen Main Library). Speaking of parks, we have also installed upgraded digital irrigation control systems for parks that allow the watering to be controlled remotely without the need for technicians to physically travel to the park, saving time and effort and allowing finer control to save water. I have also used my discretionary funds to fund programs such as summer camps for students in our museums, movie screenings at parks across the district, neighborhood cleanups, a health fair, and community events and shade installation at the new Animal Services Westside Adoption Center. These are just some examples of the many quality of life improvements that have come during my term.

8. *Mr. Canales went against the wants of the El Paso Tennis Club patrons.*

The private El Paso Tennis Club wanted to expand with the addition of four padel tennis courts to the north of their existing facility, for which they have a ground lease from the City. There was a mixed reception for the proposal from the adjacent neighborhoods and immediate neighbors, mostly centering on open space concerns related to further development within the Billy Rogers Arroyo Park & Nature Preserve. I facilitated meetings between the Club and the neighboring Kern Place Association and Rim Area Neighborhood Association. I have not halted the Club's progress or had an opportunity to officially weigh in on the Club's proposal; the issue has not come before the City Council for any kind of decision.

9. *Mr. Canales's willingness to spend taxpayer dollars frivolously looking for a city manager.*

The City Council decided to hire a search firm to conduct a national search for a new City Manager at a cost of \$42,000 (or approximately 0.003% of the City's annual budget). I voted in favor of doing so. As the Chief Executive Officer of the City, the City Manager role is very important to how the City functions, and I wanted to take every step to make sure we had the best possible pool of applicants for the position. Hiring an external firm also avoids any potential conflicts that could arise from an internal hiring team being responsible for the search for their own future boss, especially when some of the candidates could be their present supervisors. I don't think this is a frivolous expense. I will also note that last year, in my first year voting on a budget and property tax rate, I voted for and the City Council adopted the no-new revenue rate for the first time in recent memory, meaning no increase in property taxes and offsetting increased property values for the average value home. We have introduced the no-new revenue rate again this year. Overall, that represents a greater than 11% decrease in the City's tax rate over two years. I didn't campaign on holding the line on property

taxes because I know there are uncontrollable externalities that can prevent that from happening, but we have managed to do so over the last two budgets and I am proud of that.

10. Mr. Canales pushed voter-authorized road improvement bonds out into later years when, in fact, we need it now.

I frankly don't know what this one is about. No bond funds for street improvements have been pushed into later years, by me or by anyone else. The City has spent upwards of \$10 million on street resurfacing and reconstruction in Fiscal Year 2024, and the proposed budget for Fiscal Year 2025 will do so again. A portion of South Mesa Hills was resurfaced this year, with the remainder as well as De Leon Drive set for resurfacing in FY 2025.

I have been engaged with and responsive to constituents across my district during my 19 months in office. This group wants me to unquestioningly agree with their opinion in opposition to affordable housing in our neighborhood and commit now to voting against it. I have been abundantly clear with them that I am listening to them and I hear their concerns, but that I will also listen to other perspectives and I won't make a final decision until I have the full picture. The public hearing will be held at the City Council meeting on September 10. Until then, I am open to hearing well-reasoned arguments for or against the proposal, and those will inform my decision. I have been clear and transparent about the zoning process, my thoughts, and my decision-making process, as you can see from my letter to the neighborhood of April 14. The neighborhood did not have an active association until this one formed in the last two months specifically in opposition to HOME's proposed development, and I am happy to engage with them in their new organized group. I have always invited active engagement with *all* of my constituents, as individuals or organizations, through my regular community meetings, email newsletter, social media, neighborhood association meetings, and my involvement with many community organizations and events, and I will continue to do so.

It is absolutely okay for people to disagree with specific policy decisions of mine or to be critical of my votes; not everyone agrees on every issue, and that is the nature of elected government. That said, I'm disappointed in this attempt to falsely discredit me because I didn't immediately agree to this group's demand to oppose HOME's proposed affordable housing development. To recall an elected official over a policy decision that hasn't even happened yet makes no sense at all. If the group is able to collect the required amount of signatures, then I will stand in a special election to keep my seat. Holding a special recall election would cost the taxpayers approximately \$275,000.

As a final note: Some of the language that I have heard in opposition to HOME's proposed development has been, in my opinion, unacceptable. I have been told that "those people will bring disease to our neighborhood"; "it's not the buildings that we don't like but what they will put inside

them” (note the use of ‘what’ and not ‘who’ to describe people); “they’ll fill our neighborhood with illegals”; “keep the riff raff away”; and many other such derogatory comments. [This gofundme](#) from Linda Peacock entitled “Save Coronado Del Sol and Hills from Harm” describes stereotypes of working class residents such as “loud mufflers and loud cars causing extreme noise pollution” and “graffiti, crime, increased police presence due to questionable activities, drugs and the influence of drugs on our residents”. More than 52,000 El Pasoans live in HOME’s 99 communities located throughout the city and several thousand more are on their waiting list, and those residents are no less El Pasoan than anyone else. As I have said, I will gladly listen to well-reasoned arguments in favor or against HOME’s proposal, but I will not tolerate stereotyping or dehumanization of the working people, senior citizens, children, and people with disabilities who make up HOME’s residents.

I will follow up shortly by forwarding you the referenced emails.

Good wishes,

Chris Canales

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